Proclamation No. 2024-04
Designation of April as Second Chance Month

WHEREAS, every person is endowed with human dignity and value; and

WHEREAS, redemption and second chances are American values; and

WHEREAS, an estimated 70 million American citizens have a criminal record; and

WHEREAS, those individuals who have paid their debt after committing a crime face significant barriers, also known as collateral consequences, to reintegrating into society; and

WHEREAS, many of these consequences are mandatory, without taking into account the seriousness of the offense, the time passed since the offense, the individual's efforts to make amends, or whether the consequence has a proven public safety benefit; and

WHEREAS, gaining meaningful employment is one of the most significant predictors of successful reentry, and ninety percent of those who have been incarcerated struggle to find employment because of societal and legal barriers; and

WHEREAS, while education is also a significant predictor of successful reentry, those with a criminal record have significant difficulty acquiring admission to and funding for educational programs; and

WHEREAS, people with a criminal history also face significant barriers in securing a place to live, and this inability to access housing has been found to increase the number of individuals returning to prison; and

WHEREAS, these and other barriers prevent the 70 million Americans with criminal records from contributing fully to their families and communities, which negatively impacts the well-being of their children and families for generations; and

WHEREAS, the designation of April as Second Chance Month can contribute to increased awareness about the challenges faced by those who have paid their debt and generate opportunities for individuals, employers, congregations, and communities to extend second chances.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Maureen Copelof, Mayor of Brevard, do hereby proclaim April 2024 as "Second Chance Month." During this month I call on residents to honor the work of those who strive to remove barriers that prevent individuals with a criminal record from becoming productive members of society and to observe Second Chance Month through actions and programs that promote opportunities to unlock second chances.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and cause the Seal of the City of Brevard to be affixed on this 1st day of April, 2024.

ATTEST:

Denise Hodsdon

Denise Hodsdon, CMC
City Clerk

CITY OF BREVARD, NC
CORPORATE SEAL

Maureen Copelof

Maureen Copelof
Mayor